A LETTER TO A GENTLEMAN IN LONDON.

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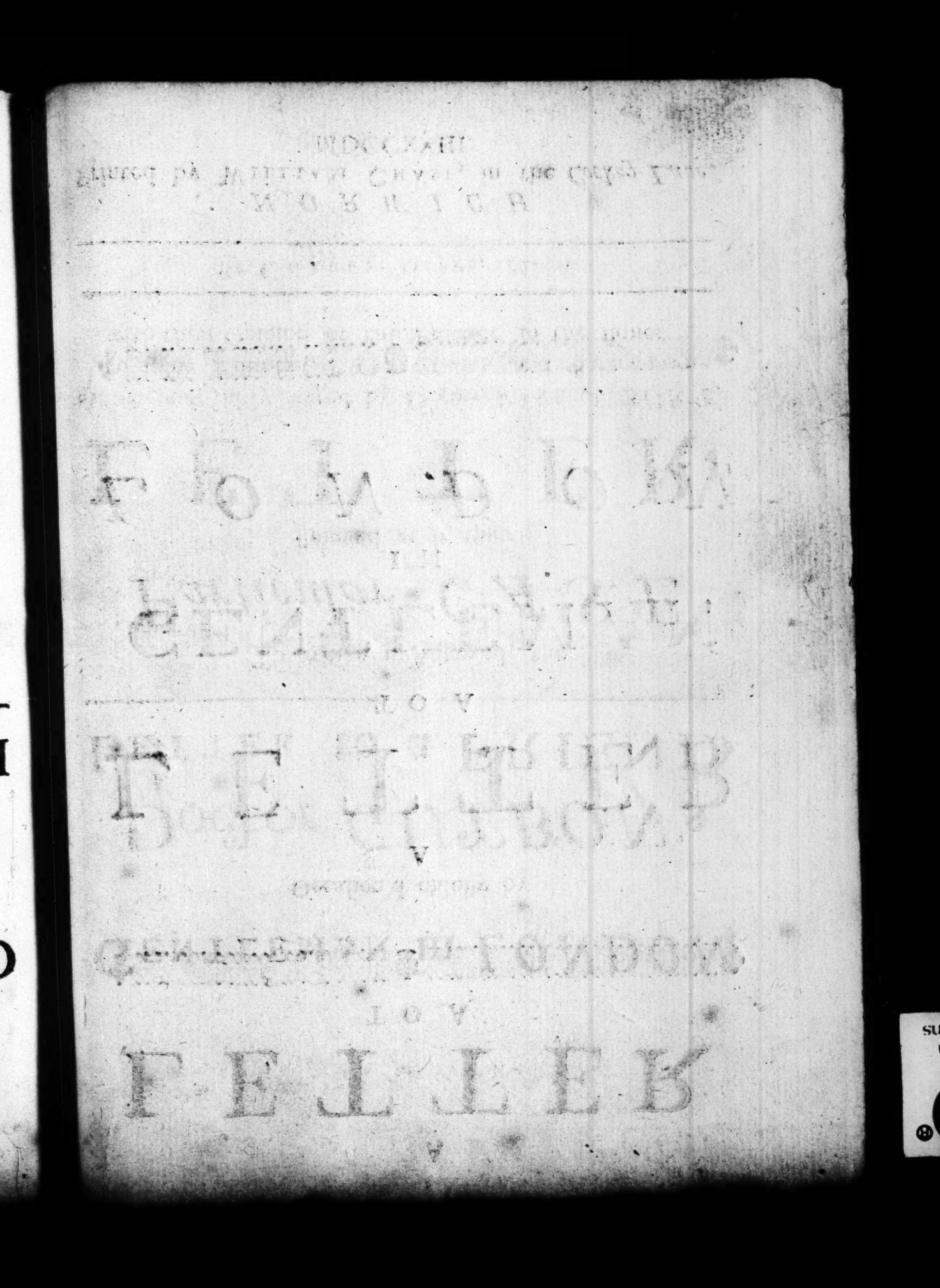

A

LETTER

TO A

GENTLEMAN in *LONDON*,

Occaſion'd chiefly by

Doctor *GUYBON*'s LETTER to a FRIEND.

To which is Annexed, the

Particular CASE

Pointed at in that

LETTER.

As it was juſtly ſtated by Doctor PAKE of *BURY*, to ſome Eminent PHYSICIANS and SURGEONS, with their Opinion of the Practice in the ſame.

By CHARLES GIBBS, M. A.

NORWICH:
Printed by WILLIAM CHASE, in the *Cockey-Lane*,
MDCCXXIII.

LETTER

TO A

GENTLEMAN in LONDON,

Occasioned by

Doctor GUTHRIE's

LETTER to a FRIEND,

To which is Annexed, a

Particular Account

of the

LATE TRIAL

As it was truly Stated by Doctor Pitcairn, and Mr. Gordon,

to Some Members of the Committee of Elections.

Printed by W. and J. Cruikshank, in the Strand. 1782.

MDCCLXXII.

A

LETTER

TO A

GENTLEMAN

IN

LONDON, &c.

SIR,

I THANK you for the Favour of Yours, and the kind Concern you are pleaſed to expreſs for the Loſs of my dear Son, and the Uſage I have met withal from a Neighbouring Phyſician.

'TIS very hard to be attack'd in the midſt of Afflictions, and, as it were, forc'd to write upon ſuch a

doleful Subject, to have my Sorrows exaſperated, and new Fuel added to the Flames! This I call barbarous Treatment, becauſe I can give it no ſofter Term.

THE Deſign of the late invidious Publication, was levell'd at my Misfortunes, as well as the Reputations of other Men: For 'tis plain my poor Son's unhappy Caſe gave Birth to that Performance. For tho' it is not directly quoted, yet 'tis pointed at from every Paragraph: The Suggeſtions and Inferences are obvious, and I ſhall never thank him for ſuch a Degree of Tenderneſs: And let the Caſe appear to be as it will, the Part he hath acted in it, will never recommend him to me nor to the World.

WHETHER I have any Credit with that Gentleman at this Time of Day, I neither know nor care: However, I give you my ſolemn Word of it, that I never diſliked him as a Phyſician: I always valued him as a Friend; but, as well as I thought I knew him, I never knew he had any Pretentions to a great Knowledge in Surgery; which put me upon calling in Doctor *Pake*: And I was ſo far from ſlighting or neglecting him, that I always declared he ſhould be employed as Phyſician, whenever the Attendance of one appeared neceſſary to me; but he himſelf was pleaſed to obſtruct it, by giving too much Credit to his Friend Mr. *Br——yrs*, and treating me in a Manner that did not become him.

You

You know very well, as ſoon as the Operation was performed, he thought fit to condemn the Judgment, and very modeſtly ſent the Condemnation in Form to me; (the pretended Deſign of that Letter indeed, was to acquaint me with a Breach of Friendſhip; which Charge was every way falſe and Groundleſs, and was as unhandſomly ſupported; as will appear to any unprejudic'd Perſon, from what I have ſaid of it my ſelf, and the Certificate at the End of this Letter. Thus provok'd, I returned him an Anſwer, and apply'd to Doctor *Pake* to juſtifie the Proceedings; which he did to my Content: However, for further Satisfaction, (without my Requeſt or Privity) he drew up the Caſe, and ſent it to his Friends at *London*, that they might give their Judgment likewiſe; which they did in the Manner you ſee in the Appendix. The Original Paper was ſent to me, and the Gentlemen having given their Conſent, I think it now abſolutely neceſſary to publiſh it to the World, and do atteſt it to be a true Copy.

'Tis not poſſible for me to expreſs, or you to conceive, the many Inſults, the repeated Ruffles and Diſturbances that have been given me, and the diſtreſſed Mother, upon this Occaſion: As they are not to be equall'd, ſo they are ſcarce to be pardon'd.

Not many Months ſince, there was a Letter wrote and directed by Doctor G——*n*, to a Clergyman at a Place where I was expected; the Subject of which con-

concerned no one in Company but my ſelf, and therefore was plainly deſigned for my Entertainment; in which was contained this handſome Expreſſion: "The "Patient had been alive, had it not been for the "moſt egregious Miſmanagement in the World." How is this to be reconciled to Decency, a tender Regard for Truth, and the Peace and Quiet of the Afflicted? Why muſt ſuch a ſevere Sentence be ſent in ſuch a Manner to a Father?

THE other Part of the Letter, I found, was a heavy Complaint againſt me, for ſhewing Dr. *Pake*'s Letters to my Friends, and not communicating of them to him. In Anſwer to which; in the firſt Place, I ow'd him no Civilities; in the next, the Letters were wrote not to gratifie and oblige him, but for the Sake of the unhappy Relations of an unfortunate Child.

AS ſtupid as my Misfortunes may have rendred me, I have Senſe enough to reſent ſuch Uſage, and I declare it to the World I do ſo.

THERE were two remarkable Caſes depending in our County about the ſame Time, of which I had particular Information, and the Manner of treating them, and the Proſpect of Succeſs in them, encouraged me to comply with Amputation in my poor Son's Caſe: Beſides, they told me 'twas the only Chance he had for his Life, and that I could not be ſaid to give him

him fair Play for it, unleſs I ſubmitted: Theſe were powerful Arguments, ſuch as I could neither anſwer nor reſiſt. But to return, the firſt Inſtance was of a Child at *Northwalſham*, about ten Years old, which was ſeized with a Weakneſs in her left Knee, without Pain at firſt; which (by the Help of Diet-Drinks, Emplaiſters, Purges, and an Iron which went fr m her Knee, and fixed to her Shoe) was ſeemingly cured, and ſhe recovered her Strength pretty well again. About ſix or eight Months after, the Weakneſs returned with a Tumour, and violent Pain in the ſame Knee: Her Mother thought ſhe could bring it to Suppuration (tho' told the contrary by the Perſon ſhe had formerly employed) ſo tried to do it for better than three Months, but all in vain. The Mother then ſent for the Surgeon, and he examining the Knee, found the Heads of the two Bones ſeparated ſome Diſtance, the one from the other. In order to ſave the Limb, he propoſed Salivation; the Parents obſtructed it, ſtill believing it would ſuppurate, therefore he was obliged to uſe a milder Method; but without Succeſs. The Tumour encreaſed, and fell into the Legg, with an Increaſe of Pain: The Child's Death was every Day expected, being very much reduced: The Surgeon ſaid, there was no other Way left to ſave her Life but Amputation; they ſeem'd at firſt againſt it: However, tho Child conſented to it. The Surgeon thought, as Amputation was reſolved on, he might try whether there was Matter lodg'd any where, tho' he was very well

 ſatisfied

ſatisfied to the contrary: Still, that the World might not judge him too raſh, he made a Puncture with his Impoſthume Lancet in the ſofteſt Part; but nothing but a ſmall Quantity of Blood iſſued out.

FINDING no Matter, he ſoon after proceeded to Amputation: The Patient, who had not for many Months ſlept without a Night-Draught, without any Art fell faſt aſleep in leſs than half an Hour after the Operation was performed: She has ever ſince diſuſed them, and continues now in perfect Health.

THE other Inſtance was in one Mr. *Smith*, an Attorney at Law in *Colteſhal*, an old Acquaintance, and School-Fellow of mine: I had the Relation from himſelf, and I will give it you as near as I can, in his own Words. His firſt Grievance began with a Pain in his Knee, which daily encreaſing, made him apply to a Surgeon in *Norwich*, who had him under his conſtant Care for about three Months; but finding no Benefit, he employed another at *Northwalſham*; who, by Doctor *Amyas*'s Advice, ſalivated him for about ſix Weeks, during which Time the Tumour abated, and the Pain was gone, but after the Spitting was over, both returned as great and violent as ever. Then he was adviſed to go to the *Bath*, and to take *London* in his Way, where he met with ſome Friends who diverted him from purſuing his Journey: However, he had the Misfortune there, to fall into the Hands of a Quack,

Quack, who aſſured him of Succeſs, and for ſix Weeks uſed his Endeavours, but to no Purpoſe. Then he called in Doctor *Mead*, who immediately told him 'twas Surgeon's Buſineſs, and adviſed him without Delay to call a Conſultation: Accordingly he ſent to Mr. *Salter*, Mr. *Ferne*, and Mr. *Kellaway*, all eminent Perſons in that Profeſſion; who upon View, and feeling of the Part, unanimouſly agreed that nothing but Amputation could relieve him; and ſaid, the ſooner he ſubmitted, the better: And all of them agreed it was not proper to lay open the Swelling; apprehending if they had, he would have bled to Death. Then he came home; and as ſoon as the Weather grew cool, he ſubmitted to the Judgment; Mr. *Raban* of *Northwalſham* being concerned as Principal, Mr. *Layman* of *Diſs* as an Aſſiſtant, at the Operation. And the Patient is now in perfect Health.

Both theſe Inſtances come much nearer my Son's, than that darling One in *Scultetus*, which was ſent in triumph about the Country, long before the Printed Letter appeared: But the laſt (as far as I am capable of judging) is parallel with it.

Give me Leave Sir to obſerve, in the forecited Caſes, the Parts were never laid open, nor any Recourſe had to the actual Cautery, in order to dry up the Morbid Humidity in the Bones, or to correct the Acrimony of the Fluids; nor was there any apparent Signs of a Mortification; and yet Amputation was performed,

formed, and I never heard that any Doctor of Phyſick ſent any Letters to the near Relations, to comfort them with Inſtances of Miſconduct. I never heard that all, or any of the Gentlemen concerned, were charged with a *Mala Praxis*, either by thoſe that had, or had not ſeen the Caſes; and whether any Symptoms did not ſupervene to recommend or enforce Amputation in our Caſe, is what the Cenſor could not well diſcover; for he never ſaw the Caſe, but form'd a random Judgment about it, without having any true Relation of it.

A Surgeon at *Harlſton* indeed, by whom the Phyſician, I believe, was pretty much Animated, (if not Aſſiſted) talk'd very freely about it, tho' not like One that underſtood it; and amongſt the reſt of the Good-natur'd-things that he was pleaſed to ſay upon the Occaſion, had the Aſſurance to tell a Gentleman of my Acquaintance, That I ſubmitted to have the Limb taken off, even whilſt the Salivation was depending; a Fact as ſcandalouſly falſe, as any thing could be; but this Friend of His is gone, and therefore, I will tread as ſoftly upon his Aſhes, as poſſibly I can.

THE Obſervation that thoſe who have had Members Amputated, are ſubject to the worſt Defluctions, and Die TABID, prov'd true in my Son's Caſe, and I ſhould always have lamented it without having been ſo publickly Reminded of it: However,

I have

I have the Latt. Edit. of Dr. *Bennet*, (in which Language he wrote his Book) now upon my Table; I ſhall Quote the whole Paragraph, and you will ſee, there is not one Word of Dying TABID. "*Apud* "*illos maxime Sævire videntur Fluxiones, quibus Mem-* "*bra amputantur, aut quibus a vaſorum exiliorum in-* "*factione partes remotiores impervia redduntur* Bennet "*Theat. Tabid. Exercitatio* 4ta *Page* 12." So that the Tranſlator ſeem to be Cited in the Letter, and not the Author; for I am pretty ſure Dr. *Bennet* did not Tranſlate it himſelf. Beſides, I am very well inform'd, That ſeveral Perſons who have loſt their Limbs, are very Fat; and a Gentleman's Son at *Colcheſter*, in the ſame Circumſtances with my Son, Dy'd TABID, for want of Amputation, the Mother not complying with it; as was lately obſerved by Dr. *Wallis* of *Ipſwich*.

AND now, I beſeech God, that no Parent may ever meet with ſo ſevere a Trial in a Child ſo Beloved as mine was; (for whoſe Sake no one can tell what I endure) at leaſt, may he never be Treated under it, as I have been: But if it ſhould be my harder Fate ſtill, to have my other Son, (my only Child) labour under the like Misfortune, as my preſent Judgement is, I would purſue the ſame Methods; I would ſend immediately for Dr. *Pike*, and I would employ the ſame Surgeons, Mr. *Layman* of *Diſs*, and Mr. *White* of *Ipſwich*, in order to his Recovery, maugre all the Diſcouragements I have met

met withall to the contrary; and let what will befall me in other Reſpects, I dare ſay, I ſhall never trouble my ſelf any more to Conſult the Oracle at *Diſs*: And if I am not the moſt Miſtaken Man, as well as one of the moſt Unhappy Fathers in the World, this Affair will end in his eternal Diſgrace, and Confuſion.

I am,

SIR,

Your Obliged,

Humble Servant,

C. GIBBS.

Tivetſhall
April the 12th,
1723.

MVSEVM
BRITAN
NICVM

AN

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APPENDIX.

Mr. *Gibbs*'s Son's CASE, as ſtated by Doctor *Pake*, to the *London* Phyſicians and Surgeons.

THE 25th of November 1720, I was ſent for to a young Gentleman about 16 Years of Age, concerning a large and hard Tumour upon the upper head of the Fibula, of three Months ſtanding, together with a very acute Pain, and a little Contraction of the Ham. Mr. *Layman*

Layman, a Surgeon at *Diſs*, (in whoſe Houſe he Lodged) had treated it above a Month with ſeveral external Applications, and purging Pills with Calomel, but without ſucceſs; to purſue the ſame Intention of diſſolving the Humours if poſſible, I adviſed a gentle Salivation, under which he continued not above a Fortnight; for when I ſaw him again, the 11th of December, I found the Tumour rather larger, of a Livid Colour, and the Pain encreaſed, for which reaſon he was Purged off, and concluding the Bone foul, I declared that nothing but Amputation could relieve him.

THE 25th of the ſame Month, I found his Pains were ſo violent, that they were accompany'd with a hectic Fever, and a conſiderable waſting of his Fleſh, and no Anodynes could Eaſe him; upon which, I inſiſted more earneſtly on the neceſſity of Amputation, and that ſpeedily, before his Strength ſhould be too far ſpent for want of Reſt, and Nouriſhment; however, I conſented to a previous opening of the Swelling, not doubting but the neceſſity of taking off the Limb would ſtill be more Evident from Internal appearances. It was done accordingly, but no diſcharge of any thing but Blood, and with the Probe, ſeveral Pieces of the Bone were felt looſe.

UPON this we were more confirm'd in our Opinion for Amputation without loſs of Time; it was agreed on, and on the 28th perform'd above the Knee, my-

ſelf

ſelf preſent, and five Surgeons: He bore the Operation well, and mended dayly, and about two Months after, went home to his Father.

THE 5th of April 1721, I was conſulted again about him, by Letter from Doctor *Paſton* of *Harlſton*, which mentioned an Aſthma, an intermitting Fever, and a Phthiſis. April the 18th, I ſaw him the laſt Time far gone in a Phthiſis; of which he died not long after.

Item. UPON Diſſection of the Leg when taken off, we found the Swelling to be a large carious Exoſtoſis, weighing ſeven Ounces.

Upon the aforementioned CASE, I deſire but a candid Anſwer to the following Queſtions, *viz.*

We the Phyſicians and Surgeons under-ſigning, having conſidered the annext Caſe, give the following Anſwers to the ſeveral Queries, as our Opinion.

I.

Whether the Salivation was altogether unjuſtifiable, and fatal to the Patient?

Anſw.

The Salivation was juſtifiable, and the beſt Remedy to ſave the Limb, and not fatal to the Patient.

II.

Whether there was not an apparent Neceſſity for a ſpeedy Amputation, from the ſeveral Circumſtances mentioned?

Anſw.

The Salivation not relieving, and taking in all Circumſtances, there was an abſolute Neceſſity to take off the Limb; that being the only Chance to ſave his Life.

III.

What Probability there was of ſaving the Leg under thoſe Circumſtances, without hazarding his Life?

Anſw.

He would have died ſooner, had not the Limb been taken off.

IV.

Whether his Death, four Months after the Amputation, can reaſonably be charg'd upon that Operation?

Anſw.

The taking off the Limb could not be the Occaſion of his Death, but rather the ſame Humour that was the Occaſion of the Exoſtoſis.

H. PLUMTRE, R. MEAD, } M. D.

S. PALMER, J. TANNER, } Chir.

POSTSCRIPT.

POSTSCRIPT.

WHEN I first sent for Doctor *Pake*, I knew nothing to the contrary, but that he constantly practiced Surgery as well as Physick, and therefore represented him in my Letters after that Manner; but I find I was mistaken, he being of late Years call'd in only in Consultations: I believe the Doctor will pardon the Mistake: Nor do I think it any Reflection that a good Physician, who is obliged to act, *totis viribus* (as I verily believe he did) for the Good of his Patient, should be capable of acting as a good Surgeon too; and I remember Doctor *Brady*, the Physick Professor of *Cambridge* in our Time, practiced both.

ADVERTISEMENT.

Auguſt 24th 1722.

WHereas Dr. *Guybon* hath reported, or, given under his Hand, that Mr. *Gibbs* abſolutely refuſed to Employ him in his Son's Caſe; and doth further Inſinuate, as if Dr. *Pake* was call'd in as a Phyſician: I do hereby Atteſt, that Mr. *Gibbs* always declared his readineſs to Conſult Dr. *Guybon*, before any other Perſon, as a Phyſician; and that Dr. *Pake* was ſent for to be Conſulted, as the Caſe was Chirurgical: And I do further Declare, that Mr. *Gibbs*, Dr. *Pake*, and *My Self*, did mutually agree, that, Dr. *Guybon* ſhould Viſit Mr. *Gibbs*'s Son as a Phyſician.

Teſt.
William Loyd,
Jo. Darby.

MVSEVM BRITANNICVM

Witneſs my Hand,

HAB. LAYMAN.

FINIS.